

Dr. J. L. C. S. 841.2.67
Colman (George)
**THE
OXONIAN IN TOWN.**

**A
COMEDY,
IN TWO ACTS,**

As it is Performed at the
THEATRE ROYAL in COVENT GARDEN.

No, Septimius ;
To be a ROMAN were an honour to you,
Did not your manners and your life take from it,
And cry aloud, that from Rome you bring nothing
But ROMAN vices, which you would plant here,
But no seed of her virtues.

Beaumont and Fletcher's False One.

L O N D O N,

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R. BALDWIN, in Paternoster-Row. 1770.

(Price One Shilling.)

OXONIAN TOWN

C. O. M. E. D. Y.

THE TWO C. S.

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TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
JOHN HELY HUTCHINSON,
PRIME SERJEANT AT LAW,
AND ONE OF
HIS MAJESTY'S
MOST HONOURABLE PRIVY COUNCIL
OF THE
KINGDOM OF IRELAND,
THIS COMEDY
IS INSCRIBED
BY HIS MOST OBLIGED
AND MOST DEVOTED
HUMBLE SERVANT,

GEORGE COLMAN.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE fate of this little comedy, on its first appearance, was extremely singular. After having been very favourably received the two first nights, a violent attempt was made to prevent its exhibition on the third. The pretence for this determined condemnation of the piece was, that it contained not only personal, but even national, reflections. The author had the greatest abhorrence of both. The piece was written several years ago; the very names of the persons who supposed themselves aggrieved, were unknown to him; and so far from intending to cast an illiberal reflection on the Irish nation, it was evidently his main design to vindicate the gentlemen of that country from the reproach deservedly incurred by worthless adventurers and outcasts. The gentlemen of Ireland appeared the foremost in his defence. The author is truly sensible of their candour on this occasion, and is so conscious of the purity of his own intentions, which he doubts not will appear on the perusal of the piece, that he has ventured to inscribe it to one of the most eminent characters of that kingdom,

P R O.



PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. WOODWARD, in the Character of a Gentleman-Commoner.

FRESH from the Schools, behold an Oxford Smart!
No Dupe to Science, no dull Slave of Art.

As to our Dress, faith Ladies, to say truth,
It is a little aukward and uncouth.

No Sword, Cockade, to lure you to our Arms—
But then this airy Tassel has its Charms.

What mortal Oxford Laundress can withstand
This, and the Graces of a well-starch'd Band?

In this Array, our Spark, with winning Air,
Boldly accosts the froth-compelling Fair:

Fast by the Tub with folded Arms he stands,
And sees his Surplice whiten in her Hands;

And as she dives into the soapy Floods,
Wishes almost himself were in the Suds.

Sometimes the Car he drives impetuous on,
Cut, lash, and slash, a very Phaeton!

Swift as the fiery Coursers of the Sun,
Up Hill and down his raw-bon'd Hackneys run.

Leaving, with Heat half dead, with Dust half blind,
Turnpikes, and bawling Hosts, unpaid behind.

You think perhaps we read—perhaps we may,
The News, a Pamphlet, or the last new Play:

But for the Scribblers of th' Augustan age,
Horace, and such queer Mortals, not a Page.

P R O L O G U E.

*His brilliant sterling Wit we justly hold
More brilliant far transform'd to sterling Gold.
Tough Euclid we digest without much Pain,
And solve his Problems into brisk Champagne.
Fir'd with this Juice—why let the Proctor come,
“Young Men 'tis late—'tis time you were at home.”
“Zounds! are you here, we cry, with your dull Rules,
Like Banquo's Ghost, to push us from our Stools?”*

*Such are the Studies Smarts pursue at College—
O! we are great Proficients in such Knowledge.
But now no more from Classick Fields to glean,
The Muse to Covent-Garden shifts the Scene.
There shall I enter next, sans Cap and Gown,
And play my Part on this Great Stage, the Town.*

[Bows, and going, returns.

*Soft ye, a Word or two before I go—
Our Piece is call'd a Comedy you know;
A Two-act Comedy: tho' Rome enacts,
That every Comedy be just Five Acts.
Hence, parent Dulness the vain Title begs
For squalling, dancing Monsters on five Legs.
The Bantling of To-night, if rear'd by you,
Shall run, like Men and Women, upon two.*

Dra.

Dramatis Personæ.

Careless,	—	—	—	Mr. Woodward.
Knowell	—	—	—	Mr. Bensley.
Rook	—	—	—	Mr. Du Bellamy.
Shark	—	—	—	Mr. Mahon.
M ^c Shuffle	—	—	—	Mr. Barrington.
Post-boy	—	—	—	Mr. Quick.
Waiter	—	—	—	Mr. Cushing.
Slap	—	—	—	Mr. Wignell.

Lucy	—	—	—	Mrs. Mattocks,
Ladies of Pleasure	{	—	—	Miss Ogilvie,
		—	—	Miss Mills,
		—	—	Miss Pearce, &c.

Constables, Drawers, &c.



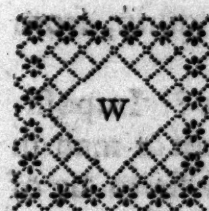
THE
OXONIAN IN TOWN.

ACT I.

SCENE, *Covent-Garden.*

Enter CARELESS and KNOWELL.

CARELESS.

ELL, once more welcome to London! Welcome, for a short week at least, days of ease and nights of pleasure! What? In the dumps, Charles? Prithee, throw off that musty college countenance. You breathe the air of dear Covent-Garden.

Know. So much the worse.

Carel. So much the worse? So much the better, you mean, Charles. Is not this cheerful square beyond the dull gloom of a melancholy

B

quadran-

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quadrangle? and the gay appearance of every one you meet, a more pleasing sight, than a few solemn faces in starched bands and grizel wigs? But what can be the matter with you? I never knew you quarrel with jollity before. You were fretful and out of humour all the way upon the road; but there your unaccountable gravity only lulled us to sleep; but now, in the name of all that's happy and chearful, awake, man! and be the same jovial airy *Knowell* you used to be.

Know. You know, Frank, that I am as fond of jollity as you are: but I must own, that our present excursion, and our late frequent journeys to town, I have particular reasons to dislike.

Care. What reasons?—You are certainly the oddest compound that ever made up one man. One minute, all alive and merry; the next, *toute à la mort*. Now would I lay ten to one that little slut of a sister of mine, that Polly, has done something to vex you. You have be-rhimed her in some woeful madrigal, and she has taken no notice of it: for nothing but love could sink a young fellow of so much pleasantry into such low spirits.

Know. Yes, one thing more, and but one perhaps, could have this effect on me. Suppose now all my uneasiness should arise from friendship, from my friendship for you, Frank.

Care. From your friendship for me? Impossible. For, without flattery, there is not a man in the world to whom I should so soon wish to be of service. Be quick, and clear up this mystery, and let me know in plain English the cause of all this disquietude.

Know. You know, Careless, I never objected to any schemes of mirth and jollity, nay, have often proposed them myself. I am a young man as well

as

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as you, love mirth as well as you, and enjoy my pleasures as heartily : but I cannot bear to see the man whom I love best in the world, whose sister I am doatingly fond of, and to whom I have reason to think, I am not indifferent — I cannot bear I say to see that man betrayed by the goodness of his heart into ruin, and falling a prey to sharpers and pickpockets !

Care. What can all this mean ? Sharpers and pickpockets !

I Know. Hard words, I must confess : but for my part, I see no difference between a cheat at the orange barrow, or the hazard-table ; nor have I more contempt for a poor rogue in rags than a rascal in embroidery. To be plain with you, Frank, I believe these new friends of ours, these three men, to meet whom was the chief reason that brought us to town, are no better than arrant sharpers ; who have a mind for a few throws at your estate, and will take care to secure the odds on their side.

Care. Away with these idle and ungenerous suspicions, for shame, Charles. They are three as hearty honest fellows as any in the world. Besides, they are our fellow-countrymen, you know. They are of the nation, honey.

I Know. National reflections are always mean and scandalous : but it is owing to such men as these that so much undeserved scandal has been thrown on our country : a country, which has always produced men as remarkable for honour and genius as any in the world. A few mean wretches, who are acknowledged rogues and vagabonds there, are no sooner landed here, than they commence fine gentlemen and persons of honour.

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Care. But still I see no reason to look on these gentlemen in this odious light. Two of them especially, Shark and Rook, are men of as liberal and gentlemanlike appearance as I ever was acquainted with; and M'Shuffle, though not quite so genteel and polite, has a blunt honesty about him, which makes it ridiculous as well as unjust to suspect him of any villainy. Besides, Rook's estate lies contiguous to mine, and he is very well acquainted with the whole neighbourhood.

Know. With every acre of your estate, that I dare say; and knows how deep he may touch you, to a shilling. As to that smooth specious behaviour, which takes you in, Frank, it is the common gloss and varnish of many a scoundrel, and lackers over most of the sharpers in town. But in that rough unpolished rascal M'Shuffle, the cheat is too gross to pass. The rank brogue in his mouth, with all that timber in his legs, and brass in his countenance, that have so long distinguished the pretended Irish *Gentleman* from the true gentlemen of Ireland.

Care. Come, come, Charles, no more of this. It is not handsome in you. I would not have them suspect your thoughts of them, on any account: nor do I chuse myself to hear any abuse of my friends.

Know. Your friends!

Care. I shall always regard them as such till I have full proof the contrary: and prithee now, my dear Knowell, do not disturb the merriment of the company, but be as free, jolly, and sociable, as usual. At the same time I give you my word, that when you can shew any convincing reasons that they are not men of honour, I will have done with them. Will this satisfy you?

Know.

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Know. Entirely : but in the mean time have a care ; do not engage too hastily, and suffer conviction to come too late for your relief.

Care. Never fear me. I shall be cautious, I'll warrant you. But we lose time : we are in the land of joy now, Charles ; life is short, and hours are precious. Let's in, and enquire after our friends, and see about the girls, my boy : soft, smiling, delicate, tempting rogues, Charles ! not like red-armed washerwomen and dirty bed-makers. Perhaps too we shall meet with some Oxford acquaintance, for I know that Bob Lounge, and Dick Scamper drew for their quarterage but two days ago ; and they always spend the first week after they receive it in Covent-Garden.

Enter Post-boy.

Post-boy. My worthy masters, would your honours be so kind as to discharge me ?

Care. In a moment.—Now Charles, (*apart to Knowell*) are not you a fine fellow to abuse these gentlemen, when you know we must borrow money from them to support us in town ? We set out from Oxford as poor as rats, have not five shillings betwixt us, and were obliged to take the post-chaise on from Maidenhead because we had not money to change at the regular stages. But however—Here ! waiter !

Waiter without. Coming Sir ; (*Enter Waiter.*) Your honours are welcome to town. I am glad to see your honours well. I hope you left all the *gemmin* well at Oxford ?

Care. Is your master at home ?

Wait. No, Sir, but we expect him in every minute.

Care.

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Care. Pay the post-boy.

Post-b. I hope your honours will be so good as to remember me some'tat. A long stage from Maidenhead, your honour.

Care. Ay, ay, take half a crown at the bar. Come, Charles. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *a Room in a Tavern.*

Enter Knowell (Waiter shewing him in.)

Know. Desire Mr. Careless to let me have the pleasure of his company as soon as he can; and if Mr. Shark, or any other gentlemen of our acquaintance enquire for us, shew them up.

Wait. Yes Sir. [*Exit.*]

Knowell solus.

Poor Careless! He is so fond of these fellows, that nothing but his absolute ruin would convince him of their villainy. To prevent which, and, at the same time, to lay them quite open to him, I have pretended to enter into this association, and to act in concert with them: in which, if I were really in earnest, I should even be a greater rascal than themselves. With what joy the scoundrels lifted me in their gang! "How useful I might be to them! How easily I might draw Careless in! and what a pretty fortune I might secure to myself!"—And then that broad-mouthed scoundrel, M'Shuffle, swearing upon his salvation "there's no thin in it, and since you can get into the best company, I'll shew you two or tree tricks that shall be worth two or tree thousand a-year, honey."—Dogs! But what to do about this intended marriage?—Careless's reserve, in this instance, vexes me. She's a fine girl, that's the truth on't;

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and sometimes seems to be possessed of a mind and disposition above the rest of the sisterhood: poor Frank thinks her an angel, and worth forty thousand pounds into the bargain. What pity it is that an excess of honesty and good-nature should make a man liable to be imposed on; and that the sincerest warmth of friendship should lay him open to the most dangerous enemies!

Enter Shark, Rook, and M'Shuffle.

Shark. Dear Knowell, I am glad to see you in town. How do you?

Rook. Welcome, welcome, Charles. How is't my boy?

Know. Hearty, hearty, my lads. Your hand, Shark; Rook, yours: honest M'Shuffle, I am glad to see you.

M'Shuffle. Arrah, my little honey, I am glad to see your face in town again, and am glad you are one of us; for you're as honest a cratur as ever won a thousand pound by two or tree little tricks, honey.

Know. But where's Careless all this while? What is he doing below?

Rook. Oh! he's in fine spirits; in a fine humour to be taken in. By the third or fourth bottle after supper, we shall do for him. He's now drinking burnt Champagne with Charlotte Brisk, and three or four more girls, in the Daphne.

Know. Well, matters go on swimmingly, gentlemen. He suspects nothing. We shall touch him for a few thousands.

M'Shuffle. Oh, never fear it Billy Baker! He shall pay us all at last. I lent him twenty guineas just now, but he shall lend them me back again by
and

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and by, when I win them of him, and a good deal more to them, faith.

Know. Ay, ay, don't let us do the thing by halves, but put your scheme in full force this very evening. You may easily get him into play, for when he is tipsy he is fond of it. Win a good round sum of him, and take his bond for it immediately. Rook, you were clerk to an attorney, and know enough of the law to draw it up on the spot. In a day or two, press him home for the money; and then he will be glad to marry Lucy as soon as possible, to extricate himself. He will be obliged to snap at the scheme, without having time to look too deeply into it, and we shall finish the whole business before he goes out of town again.

Shark. Admirable! why, Knowell, you are a perfect Machiavel in these matters; an excellent contriver.

Know. Oh, Sir! no compliments, I beseech you. But now, I think on't, I had better be out of the room, while you are at it, to prevent suspicion.

Rook. By all means. Give me your hand, Charles; I am glad we have you, by Jupiter: for you are the only young fellow of spirit I ever knew that was bred at the university.

Shark. Oh, he's a genius! Those sneaking dogs have none of them soul enough to live at the rate of a thousand a-year, without the certain income of a shilling.

Know. Why really, gentlemen, this is more free and easy than a moping college life, I must confess: and to be let into the secrets of the knowing ones is a genteeler subsistence, and will introduce one into better company than all the learning that can be scraped together at the university.

M^r Skuffle.

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M. Shuffle. Larning! oh, that must be very stupid! But, pray, what do they all do at this shame univarsity?

Know. Do? why some few unaccountable fellows cultivate the arts and sciences, and study the languages.

M. Shuffle. The languages!—Do they understand Irish, honey?

Know. No, faith, I don't believe any of them are in the least acquainted with it.

M. Shuffle. Oh, then the devil burn me, if mine ownself, or Paddy the chairman in the Pee-a-ches, is not a grater scholar than any of them. (*gabbles Irish.*) Can they talk so, my dear?

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Know. No, indeed, they can't.

Shark. But hark ye, Charles, you have a good large acquaintance in the univerfity; could not you bring up two or three more fools of great estates, and introduce us to them?

Rook. I remember young Claffick, and Tom Easy, were in company with you here about three weeks ago. Both their fathers are very rich; the lads seem to be very raw, and to know but little of the world; and, I dare say, would bleed freely.

Know. Ay, av, we'll unfeather the whole nest in time. This silly bird is fast enough limed, I warrant him. But, gentlemen, before we proceed any further, a word with you. I must insist on very hand some terms, or I break with you immediately.

Shark and Rook. How? What?

M. Shuffle. Tunder and Oons! what's the matter now, honey?

Know. Why, look ye, gentlemen, I am of some consequence, I know; and can be of great use to

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you in this, as well as several other affairs. Therefore let me know how high you rate my service, that I may judge whether I can afford to work for you.

Shark. Oh, we shall not quarrel about that, Charles. As we all go hand in hand in the business, we will divide equally, share and share alike.

Mr Shuffe. Ay, ay, never be uneasy about that. We'll all four go halves, my dear.

Know. Content. Well, since all is settled, now to business. Where's Careless? we shall have him get tipsy too soon for us. Oh! here he comes with Charlotte, and a whole bevy of women.

Enter Careless, Charlotte, and other Ladies of Pleasure.

Careless, at entering.

Dance and sing,

Time's on the wing,

Life never knows the return of the spring;

Ours is not to morrow.

Waiter! Burn another bottle of Champagne; and go and enquire what are the plays to-night.

Know. Well, Frank, have you ordered supper?

Care. Supper! Ay, and I have taken care to provide you some other dishes too, my bucks. Here they are, tender as chickens, and plump as partridges. Am I not an excellent caterer?

Know. Fine dishes, indeed! and very well dressed. (*Turning the girls about.*) Charlotte, how are you, my girl? Polly, give me a kiss hussy. Dear Nancy! (*Goes round to all the women.*) Well, how do you all? as gay, and in as high spirits as ever?

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Char. Why, I thought we should never have seen you again. You have not been in town this fortnight.

Know. This fortnight! not these hundred years!

Second Lady. Charlotte and I were going to take a post-chaise, and go down to Oxford to pay you a visit; only the what-dye-call-em's, the *doctors*, would take us up, they said.

Care. Rot the Proctors and Oxford all together, with all my heart. London shall be my university, and here I'll take my degrees in mirth and jollity.

Third Lady. I wish I may die, if I don't wonder how they do to live there. A pack of men together, without any women amongst them.

Fourth Lady. O ma'am! I can assure you they live very well. I was an Oxford girl myself. My father was a barber, and mayor of the town once. It was a gentleman-commoner of *Marlin's College* (a sweet, pretty, dear, good-natured man as ever lived) that first *ruined* me; and has been a particular good friend to me ever since. O my dear Jack Airy! when will he be in town? Why did not you bring him up along with you?

Care. Why, poor Jack has got into a sad scrape with the *Doctors*, as you call them, about a riot; and so they have confined him to college for a month. It is a pity they did not rusticate him, Charles; for then he might have been in town the whole time. But he'll come up again soon with a pocket full of money; and then Nancy—But here comes the wine.

Enter Waiter with wine.

Care. Fill a round of bumpers. Come, Nancy, here's Jack's health. (*drinks*) Knowell, give me

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me your hand, my buck! This is life, this is the thing!

No mortals on earth are so happy as we.

[Sings.]

Shark. Well said, Careless; you're in fine spirits to-night.

Care. In spirits! Ay, and we'll all be in spirits too. Well, what are the plays, waiter?

Wait. All in the Wrong, and Queen Mab, at one house; and Richard the Third, and a new Farce, at the other.

Care. O, we'll all go to the New Farce. That's the thing. We'll all help to damn it.—Ten to one but there's a riot.—We'll kick up a dust, I warrant you; and see if we Oxonians can't make a riot as well as any town-blood in London; hey, Charles?

Know. With all my heart.

Cymbal and Taber and Pipe, without.

Care. *(Sings)* Green grows the rushes, O! &c. There they go, Charlotte.

Char. O! there's the blind man. Do, Careless, let's have him up, and have a dance.

Know. A dance! Why, we're all going to the play.

Care. Never mind the play. It will be time enough two hours hence to go and hiss the farce. Let a waiter go and keep us one of the green-boxes, and in the mean time we'll right-hand and left, cross over, and figure in. Hey, Charlotte?

Char. Ay, ay, a dance first, and then the play; and then back to supper.

All

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All the Ladies. O, by all means, a dance!

Care. Why then send up the pipers, waiter.

Wait. Yes, Sir. [Exit Waiter.]

Rook. (*apart to Know.*) Zouns, Charles, this will never do. It will be impossible to manage our business, if the girls are here after supper.

Know. Very true; and therefore they shall not be here. Polly, come here, my dear, I want to speak with you. [*takes her aside.*]

Shark. Charlotte, a word with you.

Care. Have a care, Shark. Faith I shall be jealous, if you take Charlotte into a corner.

Char. Jealous! O to be sure!

Shark. You need not, I promise you. I'll only make love to her for a minute or two.

Care. Won't you? Why then for a minute or two I'll make love to my little Oxford Nancy here.

Shark. Hark ye, Charlotte. Rook and Knowell, and I, have a little business with Careless alone, after the play; so we wish you would give him the slip, and go home, and he shall be with you by one, at farthest.

Char. With all my heart. And it will do nicely for me; for I have promised a very good friend of mine, out of the city, to meet him after the play to-night at the Rose: so I can see him purely, and he'll be obliged to go home to his wife and family by twelve.

M'Shuffle. Arrah, that's a good little girl. [*kisses her.*]

Care. What M'Shuffle poaching too? Nay then its time to take care of the game, as lord of the manor. Come Charlotte? (*Musick playing a minuet without*) Here they come! [*Enter musick.*]

Ladies.

THE OXONIAN IN TOWN.

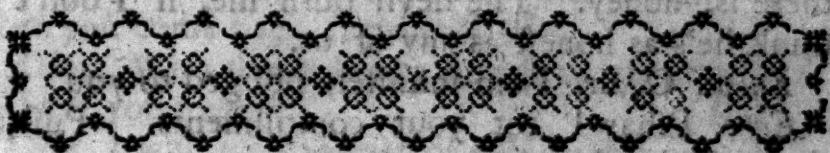
Ladies. A country dance! A country dance! immediately.

Care. Come then, call a dance. Charlotte shall be my partner.

Char. Play up Patty's Vagaries.

Care. Ay, ay, Patty's Vagaries. [A dance.]

ACT



A C T II.

SCENE, *The Tavern.*

CARELESS, KNOWELL, SHARK, ROOK,
M'SHUFFLE, *sitting round a Table, drinking.*

Care. C O M E, come, Shark; I must insist on your drinking your own toast in a bumper. Nay, nay, I see daylight in your glass still—There, there,—(*filling it up*) Come here's *The girl that we love, and the friend we can trust!* (*all drink.*) Deuce take the girls, for not coming back from the play with us!

Know. Let them stay away, a pack of gypsies! It is hard if we can't make ourselves merry over our bottle. We have good wine before us, and we'll be as happy as princes. Come, Frank, drink my sentiment in a bumper. *Here's to the filling of empty glasses, and the emptying of full ones.*

Care. With all my heart. *Here's to the filling of empty glasses, and the emptying of full ones!* (*all drink.*)

M Shuffle. Ay; here's to the full filling of empty bumpers.

Care. Ha! ha! ha!—Now this is honest, Charles, and sociable, and as it should be. Gentlemen, there is not a more hearty honest fellow than my friend Charles here, under the sun.

M Shuffle.

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M Shuffle. Upon my shoul and I don't believe there is, honey. The devil burn me, if I don't think he's as honest as any of us.

Know. O, sir, I am infinitely obliged to you.

Care. Pshaw! rot your compliments. Push about the bottle.

Drink and drive care away,

Drink and be merry.

[sings.]

Know. (*apart to Shark.*) This will do. The more singing, the sooner he'll be in for it. But do you and Rook, take care to keep yourselves sober, and let M'Shuffle challenge his next toast in a pint-bumper.

Rook. Never fear: we'll manage him.

Care. I wish we had met with Bob Lounge, and Dick Scamper as we expected. And then to have no girls neither! Faith, if Charlotte does not come soon, I'll send for somebody else.

Know. Poor Careless!

Enter Waiter.

Wait. (*to Know.*) A chairman, sir, that says your honour ordered him to call, is waiting for you.

Know. Very well! I'll come to him immediately.

Care. You don't intend to leave us, Charles?

Know. I must, faith.—A woman of fashion I assure you, and when a lady's in the case, you know——

Care. Rot your ladies! I suppose this woman of fashion is one of the orange-girls, that you made an appointment with at the play-house.

Know. No, no, a demirep of quality. But I shan't stay long. I am a man of dispatch, and will be with you again in an hour or two.

Care.

THE OXONIAN IN TOWN. 17

Care. Pray do, sir. I shall score up every bumper you miss, and we'll vote you to drink them all when you come back, I promise you.

Know. With all my heart. So adieu, gentlemen, and rest you merry! [Exit.]

Care. I wish your woman of fashion may jilt you with all my heart!—A dog! to leave a parcel of jolly fellows and good claret!—But come! where stands the bottle?

*Let's be gay,
While we may, &c.*

Come let's have a catch, a Ranelagh catch! for that's all the fashion now, you know.

[sing a catch, and the scene closes upon them.]

Lucy's Lodgings.

Enter Knowell and Servant.

Serv. Sir, I'll let my mistress know you are here, and she'll wait on you immediately. [Exit.]

Knowell *solus*.

Poor Frank! He little thinks that I have an invitation from his wife before his marriage. But I'll be revenged on him for keeping this affair a secret from me, by preventing its being his ruin. But let me see: what says her billet-doux?

(pulls out a letter.)

To Charles Knowell, Esq.

'Sir,

—um—um—half so much of the lover as of
'the wit and the gentleman, um—um—um—the
'pleasure of your company to-night by eleven—um—
'expect you alone—

'Yours, Lucy Mayfield.'

A very gallant epistle truly! and no bad picture of the lady! She would make an excellent wife, But I hear her coming. I shall use as little ceremony as she seems to do; and by that time this business is settled here, things will be ripe for our appearance at the tavern. My dear Lucy!

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. Sir, your humble servant. I am glad to find you so punctual. I almost began to think you would not come.

Know. Not come, my jewel? I received your note with more transport, than I should a summons from the first duchess in the kingdom.

Lucy. Well, I must believe you: you must be a man of spirit, or you could never have joined so heartily in our design upon Careless. Poor silly devil! where is he? What are they doing with him?

Know. He's at the tavern with Shark and the rest of them; very busy by this time, I dare say.

Lucy. Busy?

Know. Ay, my dear, this is the night of action: the business of to-night will shorten the scene of courtship between you most wonderfully. They
are

are loading his estate in reversion with a heavy mortgage or two; which may now a-days be considered as a kind of matrimonial charm, since they are always observed to give a man a great inclination for a wife.

Lucy. But should not you be there too? how will the business go on without you?

Know. Much better than if I were there. My absence prevents all suspicion. But I can assure you, Lucy, you are much obliged to us for engaging him at play, for he intended to have truanted to-night with Charlotte Brisk.

Lucy. O the impudent creature! But I'll be even with him.

Know. Well, faith, I think he loves you as well as most men do their wives, who marry for money. You must consider you are very rich, Lucy, and he takes you merely for your fortune.

Lucy. Very true. I had forgot my fortune. O how he'll bounce, and rave, and tear, when the secret comes out; and he finds that this notable scheme to take the mortgages off his estate has only laid a heavier clog on it! But I shall at least enjoy the comforts of a separate maintenance, and a tête à tête with my dear Charles here.

Know. Dear, charming girl! how shall I make you amends for this?

Lucy. O, I'll call you to an account, sir!—You shan't die in my debt, I promise you. But don't you think the old gentleman will be mightily pleased with this match, and will hug his wife heir and daughter-in-law most lovingly, when we fall on our knees to ask our good papa's blessing?

Know. Ay; that's a part of the business I am afraid you won't like.

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Lucy. The young gentleman is of age, you know, and consequently has sense enough to dispose of his sweet person properly.—Not like it? I desire no better sport. Why, can any woman, who is going to be married to a man she don't like, have a prettier prospect than a certainty of a genteel provision for getting rid of him?

Know. But then the other affair—the grand secret of your marriage——That must produce a fine riot!

Lucy. So much the better. I am fond of a riot. I love noise and bustle: nothing of consequence can be done without it. Well, I am an odd creature. I suppose you think me a strange fond thing now, to send you such a note, without so much as the least profession on your part before hand.

Know. Professions, my dear, would but poorly express my regard for you. I can assure you, I had rather be in your company to-night than with any other person in the whole world.

Lucy. Well, I must take your word.—But the servant tells me that your chair waits: prithee discharge it, for I shan't part with you in haste, I promise you.

Know. Thank you, my dear angel! You prevent my very wishes.—Here, bid the chairman come up!—As backward as I may have appeared in my addresses, I can assure you, Lucy, I have had a design upon you for some time.

Lucy. Go, you fly devil, you!

Enter Chairman.

Chair. Did your honour please to want me?

Know. Ay. There! That's the lady.

Lucy.

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Lucy. How! What!

Chair. (*going up to her, and producing a short constable's staff from under his great coat*) Only a warrant from Justice Mitimus, to apprehend you, madam.

Lucy. Apprehend me, fellow? For what?

Chair. On a special information, made by Charles Knowell, Esq.

Lucy. How, Sir! Is this true?

Know. Very true indeed, madam.

Lucy. Is this your design upon me? Wretch!—Villain!—Monster!—But it's all in vain. I won't go with you. How dare you fellow offer to apprehend me? (*to the constable*) Touch me if you dare. And you, sir! (*to Knowell*) I shall call you to account for making this riot and bustle in my house.

Know. O, ma'am, I'm fond of a riot; I love noise and bustle: nothing of consequence can be done without it.—But look ye, madam—to use but few words with you—Either submit quietly to go along with Mr. Slap here, or he has not only his partner below, but half a dozen more lusty myrmidons within call, who, in spite of all your house, will oblige you to submit to his authority.

Lucy. Infamous villain! Destruction seize me, if I am not revenged. (*bursts into tears.*)

Know. Whenever you can, I don't doubt it. But the present hour is mine, madam, and I'll make the best use of it. Mr. Slap, (*to the constable.*) be so good as to wait below a minute or two: and I will endeavour to prevail with the lady to go with us by fair means, if possible.

Chair. I'll be within call, your honour! [Exit.

Know.

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Know. If using art to detect the villainy of others be infamous, I am indeed a villain; and as such, I dare say you look upon me. But whatever I am, you must consider, madam, that you are at present in my power.

Lucy. And therefore you will ruin me.

Know. No, unless it is entirely your own fault. In consideration of your sex and youth, and something I see in you superior to the wretches you are in league with, I have hit on a method of rescuing you from the punishment that must fall on *them*.

Lucy. By what means?

Know. Only assist me in the full discovery of this black design upon Careless, and you shall plead in your excuse the having entered into this scheme with the same views that I did, and be admitted a joint-evidence against Shark, Rook, and M'Shuffle.

Lucy. Well, I am in your hands; so you may do what you please with me.

Know. Why then now, Lucy, we are friends again.—But to our business—We'll about it directly.—Honest Slap and his partner, who brought me here, shall return with you. They are at the tavern still, and I dare say poor Careless is by this time in a condition that will give him cause to rejoice at our arrival. Come, Madam!

Lucy. Sir, I attend you.—Oh, if women knew the dangers they court, when they fall into infamous courses, how earnestly would they strive to avoid them!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE;

SCENE, *the Tavern.*

Careless, Shark, Rook, M'Shuffle, *sitting at a Table with Cards, Dice, &c. before them.*

Care. [*Throwing the dice*] Seven's the main.—Damnation! Hell! Curst luck! Lost again!—Well, Sir! [*to Shark*] that makes up three thousand.—I'll play no more.

Shark. Poh, prithee, Careless, never be uneasy, man! There will be a run of ill-luck with every body sometimes. But to give you the fairest chance in the world, I'll cut the cards with you, once and no more, double or quit.

Care. Damn the cards!—But for once—Well—Come then—[*cutting*] Seven of hearts!

Shark. [*Cutting*] Ten of spades.

Care. Death and the devil!—Six thousand pounds! [*throws away the cards and comes forward.*] O Charles, where are you? I see my folly, now it is too late.

Shark. Don't make yourself unhappy, Frank. I am a little in luck to-night to be sure: but I'll give you your revenge, whenever you please; and I dare say you will be no loser at last.

Rook. Faith, Shark, you have had an immense run to-night. But I am very sorry for Careless, and am more concerned about him than the five hundred I have lost myself.

M'Shuf. O never heed it, honey! It will be all one when you have paid it. [*to Careless.*]

Care. Paid it! Death! What shall I do?—Mr. Shark, how am I to satisfy you in this affair? I

can

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can as soon raise six thousand devils as six thousand pounds at present.

Shark. My dear Frank, it's very easy to satisfy me. Only give me your note to-night. To-morrow morning I'll take your bond for the money, and I will beg the favour of these gentlemen to be witnesses to it. Come, come, Careless, don't be cast down about it. It can't be help'd, you know. Give me your note, and we'll think no more about it. You shall find me a gentleman, and——

Enter Knowell.

Know. How now, my bucks? How are you all? Hey-day! What, in the name of wonder, is the matter with you?—Careless! *What in the dumps, Frank! You breathe the air of dear Covent-Garden.*

Care. O my dear Charles, don't torture me, I beseech you.

Know. Torture you! What in the name of wonder can be got into you? I left you scarce an hour ago drinking and hollaing like a mad thing; and now I find you as dull and melancholy as a fresh-man at college after a jobation.

Care. Since you left us I have been fool enough to play, and have lost six thousand pounds to Shark.

Know. Six thousand pounds!—You have made short work of it, Gentlemen, and dispatched a great deal of business in a very little time.—Mr. Shark! a word with you, if you please.—This is a good round sum, I must insist upon four thousand.

[Apart to Shark.]

Shark. You shall have your fourth as agreed upon, and no more.

Know.

Know. Then I am off. [Going.]

Shark. Nay, hold! You shall have a third—
Two thousand.

Know. O, Sir, I shan't stay to capitulate.—
[Breaking from him] Careless, you sha'nt pay a shilling of this money.

Rook. Not pay it, Sir!

M'Shuf. Tunder and ouns! Tatterashion, what do you mean, honey!

Know. [to Rook and M'Shuffle.] Thank you, Gentlemen! Your surprize has obliged me. Now the mask begins to drop off; not but your proceedings were pretty barefaced before.

M'Shuf. Barefaced!

Know. O good, Mr. M'Shuffle, don't be outrageous. I shall go very calmly to work.—I say, Careless, you shan't pay a shilling of this money.

Care. O, I must; I must, indeed, Charles. Supposing your suspicions to be true, it is impossible to prove them, and I am bound in honour to pay the money. So, Mr. Shark, I'll give you my note immediately.

Know. It is not impossible to prove them—You shall give no note.

Shark. Mr. Careless, you have behaved like a man of honour, and a gentleman, and as such I always regarded you. But as for your friend there, I shall find a time——

Know. Find a time, Sir!—There's none like the present time—Nay, take your hand from your sword: I'll encounter you with your own weapons; a little art, Mr. Shark; two or three little tricks, Mr. M'Shuffle.—You shall give no note, Frank.—I will produce a person that shall lay down

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the whole sum for you immediately. Will that satisfy you, Gentlemen?

Shark. Yes, Sir!

Care. What do you mean, Charles?

Know. Patience a minute!—I will be with you again immediately. [Exit.

Shark. What can this fellow mean? I don't understand him. He behaves very oddly, methinks.

Rook. I don't like him. We were fools to be drawn in to trust him. He has been *smoaky* all along.

McShuf. Devil burn me if he has not got little Lucy with him. If she should prove false now, and tell the whole truth, honies?

Re-enter Knowell with Lucy.

Know. Here, Gentlemen! here's sufficient security for as many thousands as you please.

Care. My Lucy! This is generous beyond expression.—Do you, Madam, interest yourself in my distress? How can I return you proper thanks?

Lucy. I deserve no thanks at your hands, Sir! Give them to your friend Mr. Knowell. He is the only person to whom they are due.

Care. More mysteries! Explain, Charles, for heaven's sake.

Lucy. That, Sir, must be my province: and since, in spite of my present situation, I cannot relate this dark history of my shame without a conscious abhorrence of it, I shall be as brief as possible. In a word then, Sir, the friendship of these men for you, and your intended marriage with me, was all a laid scheme concerted for your ruin.

Care.

Care. How! Villains! But by what means? pray go on, Madam.

Lucy. First, Sir, they were to draw you into play, and by packed cards and loaded dice make you lose a considerable sum to them. This, it seems, they have already effected. Then, Sir, you were to have been decoyed to marry me, (whom you supposed a great fortune) which would have made you liable to a false debt of ten thousand pounds, due from me to Shark upon a bond. Here, Sir, is the bond with the blanks not yet filled up, unsigned, and unsealed.

[*Delivers a bond.*]

Care. Monstrous rascals! But pray, Madam—

Lucy. You shall know all immediately.—Having thus stripped you of so large a part of your fortune, the confederates were to divide the spoils among them; and all these designs upon you would most probably have succeeded, if Mr. Knowell had not dived into the plot, and by an artful pretence of furthering and assisting it, entirely overthrown it.

Care. Honest, generous Knowell! How have I deserved such a friend?

Know. My dear Frank, no more of this.—To be able to serve a person one loves, is surely the highest reward.—But we'll defer stating the measure of obligations and acknowledgments, till we have put a final stroke to this business.—Here, my honest friends there! Messieurs Slap and Co. walk in, gentlemen,

Enter Slap and other Officers.

There, those are your prisoners.

Slap. [*to Shark, &c.*] We seize you, gentlemen, by authority of a warrant from justice Mitimus.

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Rook. Nay, then all's over: the game's up.

M. Shuffle. The devil's in the dice tho', my dear,

Know. Mr. Slap, take care of your prisoners to night.—In the morning we'll attend you to the justice's.—We'll be bail for the appearance of the lady.

Slap. We'll take care, Sir, I warrant you. Never do you fear, my worthy masters!—Come along gentlemen.

M. Shuffle. If I once got well out of this shame scrape, upon my shoul I would not pretend to be a jontleman any longer, but would beg my way back, as I came here, faith, with a hay-fork in my hand.

[Exit with Shark, &c.]

Know. You must know, Frank, that Lucy is under our protection: I'll let you into the particulars by and by.

Care. Dear Charles, you have saved me from ruin. How infinitely am I obliged to you!

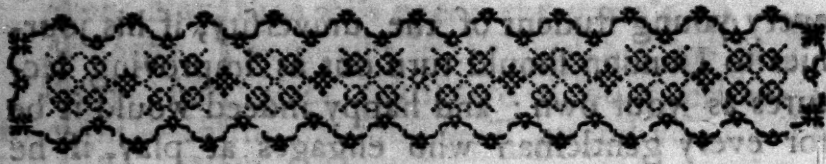
Know. Nay, no more of that, prithee, now.

Care. Well, Charles, I will say no more of my obligations to you, since I shall have almost an immediate opportunity of making you a recompence, which I believe you will be fond of. I will acquaint my father of this whole affair as soon as possible, and at the same time let him know of the fondness that has so long subsisted between you and Polly; and, faith, I think your marrying her, Charles, is a more agreeable conclusion of this business, than my being tied to little Lucy here.

Lucy. I am conscious, Sir, that I deserve all you can say of me; but I can assure you that I am heartily sorry for the concern I have had in this business, and I hope my future conduct will convince you of my repentance.—In the mean time, Sir, give me leave to say that it would be happy for

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every young student of the university, if his journey to London should turn out as improving lectures as your own : and happy indeed would it be for every gentleman who engages at play, if he had such a friend as your's, to convince him that nothing but folly or knavery can draw people to the hazard-table.



EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. MATTOCKS.

Enters with a Pack of Cards.

HERE they are, Ladies!—Shou'd these charming
Packs

Be doubly loaded with a filly Tax?

My Card to your's, my Lord, a thousand Pound!

Oh, charming Sport! Oh! might I deal 'em round!

Yet I will use 'em; and, oh deign to list!

Tho' 'tis no Lecture on the Game of Whist.

The future doom of Gamesters to explore,

I, like the Sybill's leaves, the Cards turn o'er.

Nor, think, ye Fair, these Books of Fate deceive,

These only Books 'tis modish to believe.

First, with long Staff, short Coat, a swaggering Spark,

Some Gambler 'Prentice, or Attorney's Clerk,

His Fortune asks—what Card describes these Cubs?

Oh! here I have him—in the Knave of Clubs.

By clear Construction of these Pips I read,

Thus he will play his Cards, and thus succeed:

At Hazard, Faro, Brag, he joins the Groupe,

And ends a Knave, as he commenc'd a Dupe:

And thence his broken Fortunes to repair,

At Hounslow first, then Tyburn, takes the Air.

Here, in The King of Diamonds, pictur'd stands

An Heir, just warm in his dead Father's Lands.

Now

E P I L O G U E.

*Now Hey for Cards and Dice! his Elbows shake;
The sympathizing Trees and Acres quake.*

*His Cooks lament, Dogs howl, and Grooms regret
Their Fate depending on each desperate Bet.*

*Now dup'd, the Bullet whizzes thro' his Head,
And shatters Dust to Dust, by Lead to Lead.*

*Lo! next to my prophetic Eye, there starts
A beauteous Gamester in The Queen of Hearts.*

*The Cards are dealt, the fatal Pool is lost,
And all her golden Hopes for ever crost.*

*Yet still this card-d-voted Fair I view,
Whate'er her Luck, to Honour ever true.*

*So tender there, if Debts croud fast upon her,
She'd pawn her Virtue to preserve her Honour.*

*Thrice happy were my Art, cou'd I foretell,
Cards wou'd be soon abjur'd by each fond Belle!*

*Yet I pronounce, who cherish still this Vice,
And the pale Vigils keep of Cards and Dice,*

*'Twill in their Charms strange havock make, Ye Fair!
Which Rouge in vain shall labour to repair.*

*Beauties shall grow mere Hags, Toasts wither'd Jades,
Frightful, and ugly as The Queen of Spades.*

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